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The Editorial Board will welcome suggestions for articles and for questions to be answered. Correspondence should be addressed to the Editor, Emile Burns, 16 King Street, London, W.C.2.

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MADE IN ENGLAND

THE NEW EPOCH IN WORLD HISTORY

DOUGLAS GARMAN

In a speech on the Fourth Anniversary of the Socialist Revolution, Lenin said:

> "We are entitled to be proud, and are proud, that it has been our good fortune to *begin* the building of a Soviet State, and to *begin* thereby a new epoch in world history." (*Selected Works*, VI, p. 504).

At the time he was speaking, though the main forces of intervention had been defeated, the war against the Japanese was still dragging on; while on the economic front the Tenth Congress of the Bolshevik Party had recently endorsed the New Economic Policy, that fateful step backward that was nevertheless to ensure the advance to Socialism. Yet the whole speech, modest and self-critical as are all Lenin's speeches, is full of confidence in the ultimate world-wide triumph of the working class.

Already throughout the Soviet Union that confidence was shared by millions of the working people.But in the capitalist countries it was only the most advanced and class-conscious sections of the working class—some of them at that time moving to the formation of the first Communist Parties—who, if they could have heard them, would have responded to his words. The views of the leaders of the capitalists—bankers and statesmen, industrialists and politicians—may be summarised in a quotation from *The Times*, in an editorial written in that same year, 1921, commenting on the proposal to extend credits for the relief of the calamitous Volga famine:

> "It would mean maintaining the Bolshevists in power at the moment when their misdeeds have wrought themselves out in their inevitable consequences and are threatening the collapse of the whole hateful and criminal system."

Six years later, in the anniversary spech of 1927, Stalin returned to this theme of a new epoch, developing it further:

> "The October Revolution is not merely a revolution 'within national limits.' It is, primarily, a revolution of an international, world order; for it signifies a radical turn in the world history of mankind . . . a radical change in the liberation movement of the world proletariat, a radical change in the methods of struggle and the forms of organisation,

in the life and traditions, in the culture and ideology of the exploited masses throughout the world" (*Leninism*, p. 197).

By this time, both in industry and agriculture, the Soviet Union was beginning to surpass the output of 1913; and within eighteen months the first of the famous Five Year Plans was endorsed at the Sixteenth Party Congress. Yet still the significance of Stalin's words was lost on the capitalist statesmen. In every country they were busy whipping up the anti-Bolshevik crusade to new heights of extravagance and stupidity; and at the same time clamping down more tightly on their own working class movement. In Britain this was the year of the Trade Disputes Act as well as of the police raid on the Russian Trade Delegation by order of the Home Secretary, Joynson Hicks. So wild was the anti-Soviet outcry, led by Tory politicians, that the Tory Prime Minister felt obliged to state in the House of Commons: "our rupture of diplomatic relations does not in any way mean or imply war against Russia."

Yet in spite of the unflagging hostility of the capitalist world, Stalin could speak with the same confidence that Lenin had shown; the confidence of a man who had studied and understood the laws of development of society. Nothing so dramatically justifies Stalin's confidence as the following figures, which he was able to present to the Eighteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B) only twelve years later:

Growth of Industry in the U.S.S.R. and the Principal Capitalist Countries in 1913-38 (1913 as 100)

	1933	1934	1937	1938
U.S.S.R. ...	380	457	816	908
U.S.A.	108	112	156	120
Gt. Britain ...	87	97	121	113
Germany ...	75	90	129	131
France	107	99	101	93

The war has only confirmed the trend revealed in these figures. The U.S.S.R., fighting her way to victory alongside the democratic peoples of the world, and bearing the brunt of the struggle, emerges from this supreme test of a nation's economic and political stability as one of the three great world powers. This is the fundamental reality underlying the sharp struggles at the Peace Conference, and it cannot be removed by all the warmongering of Churchill and his American counterparts or, still less, by the distortions and suppressions of the B.B.C. and Press reporters. It is the solid ground that enables Molotov and Vyshinsky to act as the spokesmen of the common people

throughout the world, confirming the truth of what Stalin could already maintain in that same speech in 1927:

> "It cannot be denied that the very existence of a Bolshevik State puts a curb upon the dark forces of reaction, thus helping the oppressed classes in their struggle for liberation. This really explains the brutal hatred which the exploiters of all countries entertain for the Bolsheviks . . . just as formerly, during the decline of *feudalism*, the word 'Jacobin' evoked horror and loathing among the aristocrats of all countries, so now, in the period of the decline of *capitalism*, the word 'Bolshevik' evokes horror and loathing among the bourgeois of all countries."

Unless we understand this clearly, we are liable to be influenced by the bourgeois interpretation of the policy consistently pursued by the Soviet delegation: that they are being "difficult" and "obstructive." We shall fail to grasp that they, too, are acting as scientists, as Marxists, basing their policy on the realisation that the new epoch, which, as Lenin said, had been *begun* by the October Revolution, has now taken definitive shape. It is therefore important to consider more fully the Marxist content of this phrase.

One of Lenin's greatest contributions to the development of Marxist theory was his analysis of the difference between the epoch of competitive capitalism and that of imperialism. He was able to prove that imperialism, although the "highest stage" of capitalism, is yet also the period in which capitalism, as a political as well as an economic system, is already moribund, is in process of decline. But an essential feature of imperialism, as Stalin insists in "Foundations of Leninism" (*Leninism*, p. 19) is that "individual countries and individual national economics have ceased to be self-sufficient units, *have become links in a single chain called world economy.*" With the victory of the 1917 Revolution, however, already one-sixth of the world was withdrawn from this single world system of imperialism; and today the Soviet Union, now firmly based on a developed Socialist economy, has established its position as a great world power.

Thus, the underlying economic fact that constitutes the new epoch of world history in which we are living, is the existence, alongside of the economy of monopoly capitalism, of a stable and expanding Socialist economy. This does not mean, of course, that on a world scale Socialism has yet become the dominant system; nor that the contradictions of imperialism are ended. Monopoly capitalism, with its centre of gravity in the U.S.A., is still tremendously powerful. But it is undeniable—and indeed few even of the bourgeois economists attempt to deny—that it is precisely this sector of world economy, the

sector dominated by unrestrained monopoly capitalism, which confronts the gravest problems. For the moment "free enterprise" may have triumphed. But, as the Wallace incident sharply reveals, there is a growing realisation on the part of bourgeois economists and politicians that American free enterprise is heading their country direct for a devastating crisis. By contrast, the Soviet Government has been able confidently to begin the carrying out of a new Five Year Plan, which will not only restore the devastation of war and invasion, but will also raise the standard of living of the Russian people above the level of 1940, thus creating the material conditions of abundance that make possible the advance to Communism.

The existence of an established Socialist economy in the U.S.S.R. does not, however, represent the whole picture. When Stalin recently expressed the view that "'Communism in one country' is perfectly possible, especially in a country like the Soviet Union," he linked it with the statement: "I do not doubt that the possibilities of peaceful co-operation, far from decreasing, may even grow." And, indeed, as a result of the victorious struggles of the peoples in the War of Liberation, that co-operation has already enormously increased. In the New Democracies of Eastern Europe the power of monopoly capitalism has been decisively broken. In varying degrees, determined by the relation of class forces within the different countries, the major industries have been nationalised; the monopoly capitalists, having exposed themselves not merely as the friends and 'appeasers' of fascism but as its active collaborators against the people, have been expropriated; and the great estates of the semi-feudal landowners have been divided up amongst the peasants. The result is not yet fully Socialist economies, since the land and the means of production and exchange have not yet been completely transferred to public ownership. But, equally, they are no longer capitalist economies. And the fact that political power, from which the monopoly capitalists have been totally excluded, is now in the hands of the workers, peasants and middle strata—hence the phrase *New* Democracies—ensures that future development will be in the direction of Socialism and not of a return to capitalism.

Thus a further characteristic of the new epoch is that, by contrast with the pre-war situation, in which the Socialist State was surrounded by hostile capitalist countries, it is today closely linked with the stable and expanding economies of the New Democracies, which, if they are not forcibly interfered with, will develop towards Socialism. And it is that that makes it possible for Stalin, dismissing the hysteria of atom-bomb diplomacy, to assert: "I do not think that the ruling circles of Great Britain and the U.S.A. could create a 'capitalist

encirclement' of the Soviet Union even if they so desired, which, however, I cannot assert."

But since the tempo of the advance towards Socialism will vary according to the relation of class forces within each country, so too will the tactics necessary for carrying this policy into effect. This is inherent in the whole teaching of Marxism, and is very clearly expressed in an article Lenin wrote in 1916:

> "All nations will reach Socialism; this is inevitable. But not all nations will reach Socialism in the same way; each will introduce a special feature in the form of democracy it adopts, in the form of proletarian dictatorship, and in the rate at which it carries out the reconstruction of the various phases of social life" (*Collected Works*, XIX, p. 256).

In Britain, the alternatives before the working class and the people were crystallised by the General Election: either to strengthen monopoly capitalism by freeing it from the controls imposed during the war, and, while maintaining the *formal* Twenty Year Treaty with the U.S.S.R., to pursue a *real* alliance with American imperialism directed against international co-operation; or, by a policy of nationalisation and overall economic control by the State, to check the development of monopoly capitalism, while at the same time carrying out a foreign policy firmly based on recognition of the possible peaceful co-existence of Socialism and capitalism.

That the latter policy is not a policy for the achievement of Socialism has already been clearly shown by J. R. Campbell in the March *Communist Review;* and so much would be agreed by considerable sections at least of the Labour Party. Nevertheless, in the sense that the full carrying out of this programme would weaken the political and economic strength of the monopoly capitalists and increase that of the working class, thus enormously facilitating the achievement of Socialism at a later stage, it is the only policy which Socialists can endorse under the conditions existing in Britain today. That is why every section of the organised Labour movement and a majority of the people voted a Labour Government to power.

The Communist Party, in supporting the programme and fighting to get it carried out, is basing its policy in Marxism. For, as Stalin long ago pointed out, dialectics enables us to grasp that:

> "We must not base our orientation on the strata of society which are no longer developing, even though they at present constitute the predominant force, but on those strata which are developing and have a

future before them, even if at present they do not constitute the predominant force. . . . Hence, in order not to err in policy, one must look forward, not backward" (*Leninism*, p. 596).

Clearly the section of society which is developing and has a future before it is, in Britain today, essentially the working class. Labour's *programme* is a *class* programme, and was understood as such by the electors. If the Government were seriously implementing that programme, it would therefore be impossible for the capitalist *Economist* to maintain, in a review of the first Parliamentary session:

"But there have been very few real mistakes of legislative policy. There is probably not a single one of all these Acts that the Opposition, if they were to come into power tomorrow, would repeal in its entirety, and not very many that they would seriously amend" (10.8.46).

The T.U.C. has expressed dissatisfaction with regard to Spain and Greece, while the *New Statesman* voiced a widespread view on the Government's foreign policy, that it "has achieved a situation where the American anti-Bolshevists and the Greek Royalists are its only wholehearted supporters" (28.9.46).

Once it is firmly grasped that the Socialist economy of the Soviet Union has come to stay and will inevitably grow stronger, and that it and the economies of the New Democracies represent the stable and expanding sector of world economy as a whole, the policy of any Government that is seeking to advance to Socialism, whether Labour or Communist, becomes clear. It must be orientated *not* "on the strata of society which are no longer developing, *even though they at present constitute the predominant force,* but on those strata which are developing and have a future before them." It is to the extent that the Government fails to act in this way, either at home or internationally, that the Communist Party and the Labour movement will continue to criticise it. For there is no middle way in the class struggle: either you work to strengthen the democratic and progressive forces, and to weaken the forces of reaction, at home and abroad; or *vice versa.*

When, therefore, we celebrate the twenty-ninth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution today, it is not only to pay tribute to the heroic people who have created the first Socialist State and who, at greater cost than any other, played the decisive part in the defeat of fascism. We are also celebrating that historic turning point which made incomparably more possible the peaceful, democratic advance of the peoples of the world to their inevitable goal of Socialism. Today humanity

is on the march. In China and India, throughout the vast continents of Asia and Africa, the mighty forces of the people are advancing. In the New Democracies the people in their triumph are throwing all their courage and energy into building for themselves a new life and a new civilisation. The people of Britain, those on whose work, whether by hand or brain its greatness alone depends, must not, *shall* not, lag behind. It is by pledging ourselves to ensure this that we, who are proud to belong to the Communist Party, can most sincerely honour those whose "good fortune it has been to *begin* the building of a Soviet State, and to *begin* thereby a new epoch in world history."

THE FUTURE OF UNITY

W. GALLACHER, M.P.

How is the Labour movement to escape from its tragic entanglement in foreign affairs and from the pathetic weakness and timidity in domestic affairs that has Ministers scouring the country, pleading with the representatives of big business to take over control of the various boards that have to be set up? The Labour Government could have aroused the enthusiasm of the Labour Members of Parliament and inspired the people and the country. We have been told so often by the leaders of the Labour Party, as an argument against affiliation, that we already have unity—unity represented by the Trade Unions, the Co-operatives and the Labour Party. But such unity, in so far as it does exist, is unity at the top, unity of officials, with no attempt to achieve unity amongst the masses; on the contrary, it is a form of unity that deliberately sets itself to prevent the unity of the masses. For unity of the masses is only possible on the basis of a policy and programme that can keep the masses always interested and active, and activity of the masses is the one thing above all others that the leaders of the Labour Party dread.

I remember discussing this with Lenin in 1920. I was opposed to affiliation and to Parliamentary action. I was for mass action as the means of achieving working-class emancipation. Lenin had nothing to learn from me as to the value of mass activity, but he had quite a lot to tell me about the futility of phrases and of the need for hard work to bring about the unity so essential for the masses, if they were to overcome the clever, cunning and unscrupulous bourgeoisie of Britain. It was not enough to denounce petty-bourgeois leaders of the Labour Party for disarming the workers politically and leaving them at the mercy of their exploiters. It was necessary to conduct such a

fight for the unity of the masses as would expose the policy the petty-bourgeois leaders were pursuing and thereby bring about conditions that would make a change of policy possible. In this fight, not an easy fight, Lenin said, we had got to use the Parliamentary platform and the campaign for affiliation.

This, in fact, was the policy decided on by the Party at its inaugural conference, but for long enough the sectarianism in the Party played into the hands of the Labour leaders, and instead of making progress we suffered a series of set-backs. For even while we were denied affiliation, we still had our democratic rights as trade union members of the Labour Party. Several resolutions were put through at Labour Party conferences in 1922-23 and 1924, limiting our rights within the general movement. Then following the defeat of the 1924 Labour Government, Baldwin and Churchill each made a speech in which they called on the Labour leaders to finish with the Communists before they could be trusted again with the responsibility of Government. With the Press of the country urging this course and using all the well-known arguments about " orders from Moscow " and " Moscow gold," the necessary atmosphere was created which provided MacDonald, Snowden and Co., with the opportunity of getting a resolution through the 1925 Labour Party Conference, depriving us of all democratic rights even though we continued to pay the political levy. While this was being done, Baldwin and Churchill were making every conceivable preparation for the fight that was pending with the miners. They knew that the workers, as a whole, were ready and likely to take sympathetic action with their comrades in the minefields, and they wanted, while they retained the maximum of unity in their own ranks, the greatest measure of disunity in the ranks of Labour. The isolation of the Communist Party through the decision of the 1925 Labour Party conference gave them an opportunity of which they took full advantage. Communist headquarters were raided, twelve of the leaders were arrested and thrown into prison, seven for six months and five, including Harry Pollitt and Albert Inkpin, the then Party Secretary, for twelve months. These latter were still in prison when the General Strike was called in support of the miners in 1926.

The story of the betrayal of that historic action has often been told. From the beginning the dominating thought in the minds of the Labour leaders was, how to get the workers back to the factories. What happened to the miners was of no consideration. What a different situation there would have been had the Communist Party been affiliated to the Labour Party, with its leaders participating in the governing councils, while that great " confrontation of the classes "

was taking place! Churchill understood that as MacDonald understood. So the General Strike was betrayed. Telegrams were sent out instructing the workers to return to work with the deceptive suggestion of a victory. The workers obeyed the telegrams, returned to work, with the miners left to struggle alone for seven long, weary months. During that seven months money came from Soviet Russia. Not for the Communist Party, but for the miners, from their brother miners of the Soviet Union.

It might be thought that such an experience would have shocked the workers and broken their faith in the Labour leaders. But the process isn't so easy. Always these latter have plausible explanations and a powerful Press to back up their explanations. Also they have an abundance of apologists, in every district of the country. These may be trade union or co-operative officials or members of local authorities or Parliamentary candidates, schoolmasters and professional people of one kind or another, with a considerable measure of local influence. All of these believe, or are anxious to believe, that there is an easy way of carrying through the transition from capitalism to Socialism.

MacDonald specialised in promising an easy way. In this country, he said: we'll bring about Socialism long before the Bolsheviks have succeeded in restoring order to Russia, and we'll do it without disturbance of any kind. This is what they like to hear. So MacDonald remained their chosen guide and leader, the Communists remained isolated, outcasts from the general Labour movement. But instead of realising their Socialist goal, they experienced the new dastardly betrayal of 1931, when MacDonald, Snowden and Thomas cynically turned their backs on their colleagues and joined forces with Baldwin and the Conservatives.

But though MacDonald had gone, MacDonaldism remained the policy of the Labour leaders. This was made clear through all the years of unemployed struggle that followed the economy cuts of 1931. Instead of assisting the unemployed in their long and arduous marches to London, the Labour leaders did everything to hinder them. These "Hunger Marches" were to them Communist "stunts." Mass action had become a matter of real dread to them, so the word was sent out to the Labour movement in the country that no assistance should be given to the "Marchers." Yet, had it not been for strikes, mass demonstrations, and hard fought battles of the workers, fifty years ago, there would have been no political awakening and no such thing as a Labour Party. The same fear of the workers, which lies behind their opposition to Communist affiliation, affected their attitude to the Peace Campaign in the years before the war.

Chamberlain's policy, his desire for a Four Power Pact, Britain,

Germany, France and Italy, directed against the Soviet Union, was driving steadily towards war. Just after the outbreak of war, a book of Attlee's speeches was published. Anyone who cares to read it will see there how he condemned Chamberlain's policy and showed where it was leading. But what did he do to stop the drift to war? Nothing. When the Communists proposed that a Peace Front should be organised based on a programme proclaimed by the Labour movement, the Labour leaders "tore a passion to tatters" in ferocious condemnation of our proposals.

Churchill and Eden (the latter had resigned from his position of Foreign Secretary) were opposing Chamberlain and calling for an Alliance with the Soviet Union, as the sure means of preventing war. We were asked if they should be taken into the Peace Front. We said yes, if they publicly accepted the conditions outlined by the Labour movement. What a howl went up from Bevin and Morrison! Never, never, never under any circumstances whatsoever, would these "pure" Socialists associate themselves in any way, direct or indirect, with such an abominable creature as Winston Spencer Churchill. So we got war; then unity with, of all people, Churchill. So it goes on. Against the Communists because they dared to suggest that the Labour movement, in order to prevent war and to save millions of young lives, should be prepared to make use of all those who were opposed to Chamberlain; then after all their protestations, they are today with Churchill against the Communists, even though they are on opposite benches.

In the country, the feeling of frustration is growing. All the time we have to fight it. But the timidity of the Government is becoming a byword. Morgan Phillips, National Secretary of the Labour Party, has been to Moscow. He and his colleagues, including Laski, had an interview with Stalin. Phillips is jubilant because, apparently, Stalin told him it was possible for the British movement to accomplish its aim through Parliament. That's always a possibility. A possibility for which all of us must work. But never will it be possible of achievement if we follow the tragically timid course of the present Government, either in home or foreign politics. More and more we become a puppet of Wall Street. Bevin has become a Kingmaker; Alexander the co-operator at Paris demands "economic freedom" for private enterprise. Is that the peaceful road to Socialism, Mr. Phillips?

At home, housing drags along, instead of driving forward as a "military operation" so much talked of in the early stages. The typically conservative attitude is adopted to family allowances, those in most need receiving the allowance in one hand and having it taken away from the other. As to nationalisation, big business, always on

the make, is to run it. Even that is not enough, but on steel, big business decides Government policy, and Wilmot shrivels up before the hard-faced steel bosses.

Is that how we are going to get Socialism, Mr. Phillips? Did you tell Stalin that you had to keep in with the Tories in order to keep down the Communists? I'll bet you didn't.

Production is wanted. Never was there such need of production. But the Government is doing nothing to inspire the workers to drive forward as they did when it was "Tanks for Joe." The Labour Party campaign has been a complete flop. Every Minister knows that the only campaign that is being made is the campaign of the Communist Party. Yes, though the workers voted for the Labour leaders as the only alternative to the Tories, they didn't listen to them, or if they do, it is with the utmost suspicion. But they listen to the Communists. They know that our Party is a Party of the working class with no other interest than the welfare of the working class.

So, Mr. Morgan Phillips, if you want Socialism, either through Parliament or otherwise, you've got to fight the Tories in real earnest, and you can't fight the Tories without the Communist Party and the mass movement the Communists can inspire and bring in behind Labour's programme.

There is the issue that faces the Labour movement. Capitulation to the Tories—to big business, here and in Wall Street, or unity with the Communist Party in a campaign to rouse the country, for a real advance against reaction here at home, for co-operation with the Soviet Union and the new democratic States in Eastern Europe for a real advance towards the realisation of Socialism.

CLOSED SHOP?

J. W. JONES

THE slogan of *Reynolds News* is: "The paper without a Peer," which we can assume implies that unlike most newspapers it is not owned by a lord. That, no doubt, explains why it is one of the few papers that hasn't treated its readers to an avalanche of rubbish concerning the alleged closed shop fight of the London Passenger Transport Board workers.

Judging by the hypocrisy, nonsense and ballyhoo which we have been reading on the question of the "Closed Shop" in the other papers, the newspaper proprietors are other things besides lords.

What is the truth behind this question, which has kept its place so

long on the front pages and on which everybody from Mrs. Wailer from Walthamstow, to K. Hardstone, Esq., of Chelsea, has expressed an opinion?

Let us look for the answer in the Minutes of those sections of the union concerned:

> "This Conference requests that the policy of the Central Bus Committee *re* closed shop following upon the repeal of the Trade Disputes Act, be circulated to Branches."

That resolution was carried at the Central Bus Delegate Conference on February 14, 1946. On March 13, the Central Bus Committee met to consider the resolution. After opposing the principle of a "Closed Shop" they resolved:

> "This Committee having discussed the question of a 100 per cent organisation expresses its opinion that this policy can *best be based upon our organisational strength rather than by arrangement entered into with the employer.*"

On March 26, the Trade Group Committee, which represents the three sections (Bus, Tram and Trolleybus, Country Services) considered the opinion of the Central Bus Committee and resolved: "That the resolution of the Central Bus Committee be endorsed."

Thus the policy of the Central Bus Section became the policy of the other two sections.

So much for the facts. But how does the "100 *per cent trade unionism based on our organisational strength rather than by arrangement entered into with the employer,*" as expressed by the Passenger Section of the Transport and General Workers' Union, differ from the generally accepted principle and term "*Closed Shop*"? That is the question which many trade unionists are asking.

Stated simply, the closed shop means: first, you cannot obtain a job without first obtaining a trade union ticket; secondly, that in those industries where there is a closed shop it is a result of arrangement entered into by the employers and trade unions concerned.

Examples of a closed shop in this country are sections of the Printing Trades, the Docks, Boilerworkers and Toolmakers. These sections of workers have arrangements with the employers that *trade union membership shall be a Condition of Employment.*

In some industries where a closed shop exists, you have the position where the employer must apply to the trade union for any additional labour he requires. In the Docks Industry you had the recent position of a closed shop principle in "the job from father to son dispute."

In America, which can be said to be the home of the closed shop, you not only get *condition of employment* agreements, but also agreements where trade union dues are deducted from the wage packet. America is also, as we know, the home of the Company Unions—that means unions formed by the employers, with leaders selected by the employers, with wages and conditions determined not by the workers but by the employers and other stooges. Having regard for the fact that fascism has been mentioned by our opponents, it is well to remember that these American Company Unions were the forerunners of Hitler's Labour Front and his State unions, with their State-appointed leaders and their State-determined wages and conditions.

We have seen that the closed shop means an agreement with the employer to make trade union membership a condition of employment. We have not made that application to the L.P.T.B. We are anxious that the job should be an open one. We do say, however, to the Board, that "once a man enters your employment he will have to pay the cost of maintaining and improving the wages and conditions obtained from you." If he wishes to continue to enjoy them but refuses to pay, then we shall put into operation our right to refuse to work with him. Put another way, it means we shall fight parasites of the working class as we fight parasites of the boss class. The argument put forward by some people that there is no difference between a closed shop and 100 per cent Trade Unionism is, it appears to us, to argue that there is no difference between a "demand" and an "agreement."

So much for the differences! What of the problems associated with and arising from the winning of the right for a 100 per cent Trade Unionism? Can the struggle be waged along similar lines for all unions and industries, or should each union tackle the problem in line with the set-up and present and future conditions within the particular industry with which they are concerned?

We have shown, for example, that the London Passenger Section of the T. & G.W. Union have declared that their job should be an open one. In other words, you don't require to have held a T.U. card or previously been employed in a T.U. job. If you fancy driving a bus or trolleybus, conducting a Country Services coach, or working inside a garage or depot, land the job from the L.P.T.B. and you are in—but once in, you have to pay to the Union the cost of maintaining and improving the job.

Can the closed shop principle be followed in other industries, for instance in building, where the labour shortage is such and where the nation's need is such, that training schemes have been introduced in order to increase the number of skilled operatives? It would appear

to us that, with such conditions, no rigid closing of the job at this time would be justified.

On the other hand, you see the need for a demand for the closing of the job, in the example of the London Cab Industry, where previous to 1939 the industry was being flooded with cabs by the employers, which the workers resisted by the demand for " limitation," in order to be able to earn a reasonable and in some cases a living wage.

Another danger is that attitude of mind in relation to this question, which we would call " 100 per cent Trade Unionism in Isolation." By that we mean where a factory is 100 per cent in one department, and 60 per cent or less in others, or where 100 per cent exists among the men, but where the women and youths are left unorganised.

On too many occasions we have heard trade unionists boast of their " 100 per cent," which, on further enquiry, has meant in their particular department of the factory or among the men. Asked what is the state of organisation in the other departments or among women and youths, you get the reply: " We don't know."

The fight for 100 per cent trade unionism is therefore a fight not only to be used to further the industrial aims of a particular set of workers now, but a fight to recruit the millions of workers—men, women and youths—still unorganised in this country. On the day on which we achieve such a position, we end the opportunity of the employers to recruit non-union labour in order to break trade union labour.

Another question which appears to be exercising the minds of trade unionists is: " will 100 per cent trade unionism mean giving greater power to our leaders by way of the growth of centralised leadership? "

The answer is a clear No! On the contrary, it is our opinion that this fight for 100 per cent will mean the birth of a greater interest in trade unionism—which in turn means a better attendance at branch meetings—which again means that the members will be demanding a leadership which will have to pay greater attention to its wishes. It will be very difficult for bad leadership to hold office in conditions where an alert and intelligent membership, having made themselves fully conversant with all aspects of their job, and with a thorough understanding of the rules, constitution and procedure of their organisation, are on their " tail."

It is rightly said that " the constitution and rules " of the T. & G.W. Union, which were created, improved upon and struggled for by the members, are completely democratic. They can be improved—they *will* be improved. If the fear expressed in the question is realised it will be the fault of the members and their fault alone.

One further point however must be made in connection with this aspect of the question—100 per cent Trade Unionism can contain positive dangers to the members of an organisation where the stage of full and complete democracy, in line with the socialist principles of the movement, has not yet been reached. In such unions it has to be faced that 100 per cent Trade Unionism can place a weapon in the hands of a reactionary national leadership to deal with a militant rank and file membership. In such cases, therefore, the fight for trade union democracy must go hand in hand with the fight for 100 per cent membership.

A further question asked is, " having achieved 100 per cent membership, do we intend to retain it? " To say " yes " would be to state it too simply. If we so desire, we can use " 100 per cent Trade Unionism " to make such changes in the job as to make it a " 100 per cent job."

It is said that: " Historians don't make history—history makes historians." We forget the details of the history we were taught at school. We can't remember " which Royal Brother murdered which Royal Cousin," " which Royal Son betrayed which Royal Mother," " which Royal House defeated which Royal House in Battle "—we only remember it was a history of betrayal—disloyalty and disunity.

We are making another kind of history in our fight for 100 per cent Trade Unionism, a working-class history of unity, loyalty and brotherhood; a history of promise, not for the few, but for the many.

TRADE UNIONS AND NATIONALISATION

R. W. RAWLINGS

A MOVEMENT nurtured in a tradition of struggle and coming to maturity parallel with the peak development of monopoly capitalism has developed technique both of negotiation and direct action with the aim of improving the position of its members during times of comparative prosperity, and enabling it to save something from the wreck in times of inevitable slump.

When the British trade union movement entered what we may call its " respectable " phase, it did so because it believed that its objects could more easily be achieved by accepting the hard facts of the capitalist system and within its framework securing, as opportunity afforded, " another hour off the day or another penny on the pay." In that objective it scored varying degrees of success until, with our

entry into a phase of permanent crisis marked by all the now-familiar phenomena of scarcity economics and industrial depression, it began painfully to acquire a new knowledge and with it a new outlook.

This did not, of course, come all at once, nor was it adopted entirely by the official Trade Union leadership, but the effects were seen in the greater political content of branch resolutions and an acknowledgement on the part of some national Executives, notably the A.E.U. and the miners, that the slogan of " No politics in the Union " was becoming singularly inappropriate.

And then with the war came the need for further adaptations. Seen in its correct perspective as a special aspect of the class struggle into which the pioneers of the trade union movement had entered more than a hundred years before, it involved the unions in the colossal task of production in order to secure the defeat of German Fascism and its allies. To bring this about, therefore, they were prepared to part company temporarily with hard-won rights and privileges in the belief that a return to a peace from which the menace of Fascism had been removed, would be a peace in which unemployment and insecurity would also find no place.

To make assurance doubly sure, they resisted the Churchillian lure and by the votes of their members brought in a Government with a programme of full employment, social security and general advance towards Socialism. That Government has now been installed for more than a year and while as yet there has been no serious attempt to modify the economic structure on Socialist lines, we need to consider the extent to which these changes justify an overhaul of the aims and functions of the Unions involved. We are, as J. R. Campbell in the April, 1946, issue of the *Communist Review* said, passing through a phase of planned capitalism—a phase during which the standard of the workers will be improved to the extent, and only to the extent, that it develops logically and inevitably in the direction of fully socialised production.

The Unions, therefore, are bound to be vitally interested in the Labour Government's plans for bringing certain sections of industry under public ownership or control.

In 1944 the Blackpool Trades Union Congress endorsed a Report on Post-war Reconstruction which reaffirmed certain principles enunciated in an earlier report published as far back as 1932 on " Public Control and Regulation of Industry and Trade." This is what the report said:

> " It is doubtful, according to modern socialist ideas, whether there is ever any advantage in conducting an industry or a commercial service

by the method of direct state operation, i.e., by a Government Department. State activities, such as the general administration of Education, Public Health, Postal Service and Trade . . . are obviously different in kind from the operation of services like Transport, Coal Mining, etc. The former are typical Government functions which cannot be divorced from the machinery of State and Parliament. The latter are really commercial undertakings whose business is production—not regulation and supervision. The idea that socialisation and public control of industry necessarily means administration by a Government Department dies hard but is dying in every country. The importance of flexibility and expert management on the one hand and of *freedom from party political domination* [my italics] on the other hand has so far been recognised that . . . the tendency is to secure control and the elimination of the profit motive while keeping the actual management in the hands of a body not susceptible to party political pressure and interference."

This somewhat lengthy quotation is important as showing the attitude, blended of fear and distrust, adopted by some of the Trade Union leaders towards the State apparatus and, what is more significant, a refusal to appreciate the opportunities for making changes in it, which are presented by the existence of a Labour Government backed by working-class votes.

To make an arbitrary distinction between, for example, the Postal Service dealing with a whole network of communications on the one hand, and the Transport Service on the other, is merely to beg the question and to seek a justification for the policy laid down by Morrison of " Buying the best brains."

Moreover, while in 1944 there may have been good reason to fear the introduction of party politics into the sphere of public control of industry, there is, or should be, less fear on that score today unless again Morrison's addiction to a permanent Two Party system is to have a stultifying effect, not only on our political development but to no less an extent, and as we should expect, on our industrial development as well.

It is clear, however, that these counsels have prevailed up to the present, as witness the Coal Industry Bill which, in the words of Shinwell, is not designed " to entrust the administration of this great industry to the Civil Service." Instead, as we know, a Board of all the talents is to be set up and is to employ experts whose salaries, again to quote the Minister of Fuel and Power, "will be in the commercial rather than in the Civil Service range." These points have some substance when we come to discuss the steps which the appropriate

unions will have to take in order to do business with the new and hybrid form of public utility, particularly since it may set a pattern for other experiments in controlled capitalism still to come.

The essential difference between a completely socialised undertaking and one which, as in the case of coal, will be run by experts with some central authority on matters of policy, is indicated by the degree of active and effective participation in administration and organisation enjoyed by the workers in the industry. Now here we detect a divergence of view as between the T.U.C. and the Labour Government, for in the Report to which reference has already been made it is clearly laid down that

> "In relation to publicly-owned industries, it is fundamental to any plan for the organisation of a public service that the workpeople have the right to a voice in the determination of its policy. . . . there is today a conviction that given equal opportunity, workpeople who have gained their experience in day-to-day work and in the T.U. organisation of industry are as capable of undertaking administrative responsibility as those who have been assisted by the possession of certain social advantages."

This admirable statement of principle does not, however, find an echo in Ministerial pronouncements on the Coal Bill, which go no further than a brief reference to consultation with the mineworkers representatives and the possible continuance "in different form" of the Pit Production Committees. It is clear that on this point the Unions have a very big responsibility and one which transcends the narrower limitations of purely industrial policy, because it will be by their insistent demand for a responsible share in the actual administration that they will help to bring about a democratic transformation of the whole scheme of public ownership and control.

With this in mind the problems of the precise nature and extent of workers' participation in the control and management of the new nationalised industries become a major issue of Trade Union policy affecting not only the Unions directly concerned but the whole field of industrial organisation. This has already been recognised by the Mineworkers and Railwaymen for whom it has become a question of immediate urgency, and a special aspect of the problem has for long since been a major preoccupation of the Civil Service unions. It would be useful here to look at the developments that have taken place within the Service field and to see how the principle of workers' participation has been applied within the sphere of State employment. The Inland Revenue Staff Federation, for example, endorsed at its

recent Conference a Seven Point Charter which included the following pledges:—

1. To give unqualified aid to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in a speedy overhaul of income tax methods and organisation.
2. To make the Whitley Committee in the Department active instruments of co-operation . . . in solving the problems of manpower, work burden, organisation and management.
3. To consider all proposals for shorter hours, increased leisure and improved pay and conditions as partners in the venture of national recovery.
4. To join with the Trade Unions generally in exerting whatever industrial and political power may be required to guard against racketeering, excess profits and exploitation of the workers' efforts towards national revival and to seek the necessary civil freedom to do so.

There we see the beginnings of a bold experiment in Trade Union function entered into on the open-eyed assumption that the Whitley machine can be made effective for the purpose of bringing the Income Tax worker into ground-floor co-operation with the administration in the organisation of the Department.

The limitations of Whitley are, however, obvious, and one Service Union in particular has for many years sought a much greater measure of workers' participation than it provides. The Union of Post Office Workers, by far the largest of the Service Unions and the one with the greatest affinity with the big industrial unions, has for many years included in its constitution a demand for " the joint management of the Post Office in conjunction with the State and the development of the Service on lines of increased public usefulness." This object it would achieve by the creation of joint administrative councils at every level in which would be vested the ultimate determination of policy under Parliament as well as the responsibility for day-to-day organisation. The Post Office Engineering Union has also gone on record for something more far-reaching than Whitley in a recent Conference resolution in support of a policy of Union participation in control at every level of Post Office organisation. It is clear, therefore, that even within the Service field there is a growing sense of inadequacy of machinery which, while it can and does bring the " man at the bench " into much closer contact with the organisational aspects of the State apparatus, still leaves the official side with the last word. And even within this limited field, Whitley can be successful only if the administration is prepared to play ball and to display a degree of enlightenment not always to be found at that level.

It is when we come to the sphere of " industrial " trades unionism, however, that this scepticism of the Whitley function becomes even more widespread, and for very good reason. It will be within recollection that Whitleyism was conceived out of the industrial unrest that marked the closing stages of the First World War. The report that recommended it to the Government of the day expressed the hope " that representative men in each industry with pride in their calling and care for its place as a contributor to the national well-being will come together and apply themselves to promoting industrial harmony and efficiency and removing the obstacles that have hitherto stood in the way." It is only necessary to call to mind the savage attacks made by monopoly capitalism upon section after section of the organised workers leading up to the General Strike in 1926 to appreciate that almost from its inception industrial Whitley met with uncompromising hostility and very soon became almost a dead letter. Under successive Governments which, whatever their superficial character, all functioned on behalf of finance-capital, the organised workers were too busily employed protecting (with only partial success) their wage standards and conditions to have either time or inclination left for forms of collaboration which could only have led to a further worsening of those conditions. Hence the relegation of Whitley to a negligible place in Trade Union function and activity.

It will be seen from all this, that what the Unions have now to decide is how workers' participation in the organisation and control of industries for which the State makes itself in one form or another responsible can ensure its maximum effectiveness. Today, with a Labour Government in power and pledged to a Socialist programme, the Unions have a right to expect something more than Whitley and water. They will demand from that Government something more than a managerial revolution which would leave the workers in industry still outside the pale so far as their effective contribution towards running it is concerned. Within the field of State employment, where tradition has until recently conditioned the Civil Servant to acceptance of a rigidly defined code, Whitleyism has represented a big advance. It has given the Service Unions, more particularly through the impact of the war, an opportunity to play a big part in the development of departmental organisation to meet the new functions they have had to assume. It is doubtful whether the most successful experiments in Service Whitleyism compare favourably with the work of some of the Joint Production Committees set up in the larger factories during the war. Policy is of course the prerogative of Parliament, but when it comes to a decision as to the best way of implementing that policy the workers in the public service have a long

way to go before it can be said that they exercise the responsibility which under a Labour Government they should have. These are lessons which the Unions concerned with schemes of Nationalisation will be quick to learn. Principles laid down on the question of the workers' share in control may well include the following:—

1. That direct negotiation through the Union should still remain the method for handling all problems relating to wages and conditions, with access to the Arbitration Court and no infringement of the right to strike severally or collectively with other workers.
2. That management and control should be in the hands of a Board which should have ultimate responsibility subject only to Ministerial direction on major policy. Members of the Board should be people with practical experience and technical knowledge and others whose main concern is not the welfare of the capitalist class.
3. That regular statutory meetings between the Board and representatives of the Unions within the industry be held, at which all questions of production, efficiency and administration can be hammered out.
4. That the principle of workers' participation should permeate throughout the industry and be applied at every level. (It is interesting in this connection to observe that the Revenue workers from whose Charter we have already quoted have followed this up by steps which should lead to the appointment of Whitley Committees in every one of the thousand offices of that department).
5. According to the nature of the industry, representatives of the consumers or, as in the case of transport, the users, should be appointed to a separate consumers' committee to which they should be elected by outside democratic organisations.

If these principles are accepted by the Unions, we can be in no possible doubt that they will be entering into a new phase of Trade Union activity and one which will thrust a great responsibility upon them. During the transition from controlled capitalism to Socialism they will be required to show that they can take on this function of joint management without impairing their capacity as an unfettered instrument of struggle to ensure a progressive improvement of conditions while the industry itself makes an increasing contribution towards economic recovery.

It is hardly to be expected that the Trade Union movement will embark upon these new responsibilities without some reasonable assurance that the advance towards Socialism is going to be speeded up. If, moreover, every experiment in State ownership is going to be endangered by the crippling effect of heavy compensation as a charge

either upon the industry itself or upon the community as a whole, there will not be the same incentive on the part of the workers to put their skill and energy at the disposal of the administration. The effective participation of the workers in nationalised industries will in the final analysis depend on the knowledge they have that their contribution is helping to build a Socialist Britain. In any other circumstances the Unions will and must exercise their right to withhold their co-operation and to direct the whole of their energies towards a political demand that the Labour Government should stick more closely to the policy which secured it the votes of the organised workers of the country.

It can however be argued that if the Trade Union movement in general is prepared to adopt this new outlook and to assume these new responsibilities, it will be helping to create conditions in which political deterioration is far less likely to occur. Practical participation in management and control gives to the workers in industry an insight into problems of organisation and administration, a growing knowledge of the value of their collective contribution towards the smooth running of the job, a pride in the institutions they themselves have built up and a strengthened belief in their own power to organise and plan a completely socialised economy.

A movement with those attributes will be quick to detect the inadequacies in schemes of nationalisation that fall short of true public ownership and will instead see themselves, the workers by hand and brain, as the legitimate inheritors of the special castes hitherto regarded as uniquely endowed with the qualities necessary to run the industries of this country.

IMPROVING THE STATE APPARATUS

JOHN EAST

THE Labour Government has been in power for a year now, and it is becoming steadily clearer to the mass of the Labour movement that the State machine is by no means neutral and above the battle. There is a growing volume of protest about the nature of Britain's diplomatic representation abroad; there is considerable disgust about the role of the B.B.C. (see *Communist Review*, August, 1946); there is widespread disillusion about the staffing of the Boards which are to run nationalised industries and about the so-called " independents " on the working parties; while there is a disquieting trend in the relationship

between the Cabinet and the Parliamentary Labour Party on the one hand and the rank and file of the Labour Party on the other.

Not enough attention, however, has so far been paid to what is part of the very kernel of the State machine, the Civil Service. The Labour Party in their General Election manifesto, "Let Us Face the Future," did not entirely overlook this problem. It was stated there that "The Labour Party submits to the nation the following industrial programme; . . . 7. The better organisation of Government Departments and the Civil Service for work in relation to these ends. The economic purpose of Government must be to spur industry forward and not to choke it with red tape." During the last year a lot has been heard about red tape, forms, officials, bureaucracy, and so forth. In fact it is a favourite standby of the millionaire Press, rivalling Mr. Molotov as a topic which can be used every day without palling. Moreover, certain Labour Ministers, notably Mr. Shinwell, have played into the hands of the reactionary critics, by the form which their public criticisms of the Civil Service have taken, feeding the flames of what is really a smoke-screen to conceal the real objective of the attack, the Government controls.

Nevertheless, there are very real defects in the Civil Service, partly on the score of efficiency, but much more fundamentally in its very nature, and the weakness of the Labour Party's attitude lies in its whole theoretical approach, a weakness which is clear enough in its formulation of the issue in "Let Us Face the Future." The State apparatus is defined by Marx as the standing army, the police and the bureaucracy, and it is the last which is the subject of the present discussion. Lenin refers to the fact that—

> "Marx, on the basis of the experience of the Paris Commune, taught us that the proletariat cannot simply lay hold of the ready-made State machine and wield it for its own purposes; he taught us that the proletariat mush smash that machine and replace it by a new one" (*Selected Works*, Vol. 6, pp. 261-2).

The nature of the State machine, including the bureaucracy, is basically the same in Britain today as it was in Russia before the October Revolution. On the other hand, the immediate tasks are quite different from those facing the Russian workers, for whom at that time Marx's teaching on the State was literally and directly applicable. As Dimitrov has put it recently, discussing the situation in Bulgaria :—

> "The struggle for Socialism is different now from what it was in 1917 and 1918 in Tsarist Russia. . . . This course of social development,

comrades, may to some, appear slower than the policy of 'take up your arms; hit right and left and set up your dictatorship!' However, the former course is not only possible and realistic, but it is also undoubtedly much less painful for the people."

What, then, are the practical and essential tasks facing the Labour movement?

The British Civil Service is still a rigid and class-ridden hierarchy. True, since the end of last century, it has got rid of the more obvious forms of corruption, and is recruited by competitive examination in theory on equal terms for all. In practice, of course, the top posts are confined to those who have been to a University, and very nearly to those who have been to Oxford or Cambridge, which means, therefore, that owing to the familiar operations of the educational ladder, the upper middle classes and a handful from the lower middle and working class who reach academic distinction (or such of these as have thoroughly imbibed the ideology of the bourgeoisie) have a complete monopoly. There is now some promotion to the administrative grade from the lower grades, but usually of those who are in middle life and who are completely "reliable." The hierarchy is made up, therefore, of a small "ruling class" who are mainly faithful without question to the capitalist class, an amorphous middle stratum, containing a few potential allies of the Labour movement and certainly capable of being neutralised, and a vast black-coated proletariat, who have in the last two decades realised to an ever-increasing extent that they are indeed proletarian.

It is this body that is going to make a radical change in the Civil Service. The Civil Service trade unions, and especially the Civil Service Clerical Association, the Union of Post Office Workers, the Post Office Engineering Union, and the Inland Revenue Staff Federation, have become a real force. Already hundreds of thousands strong, they played a big part in the campaign against the Trade Disputes Act and have re-affiliated to the Trades Union Congress. They are now in the course of balloting their members as a result of which they will in all probability affiliate to the Labour Party. In the sphere of trade unionism proper, they represent a powerful negotiating force with many recent successes to their credit. Now, however, they are becoming increasingly class-conscious and realising their positive role in support of the Labour Government. Their members are becoming increasingly discontented with their lot as ciphers and automatons, and realise just how much they can do not only to increase the efficiency of their profession, but also to prevent the policy of their own Government being sabotaged in hundreds of small and subtle ways.

Something akin to joint production committees is already under discussion by the more advanced members, who also keep a watchful eye for obstruction or worse.

To the extent that the Civil Service unions are able to develop such a role, the position of their few allies and increasing numbers of potential allies in the higher strata of the service will become stronger. The middle strata will tend to be neutralised and more and more individuals in responsible positions will be able to make a real contribution to the work of the Labour Government. But it is necessary for the Government itself to change its policy. A few permanent secretaries or other high officials who have proved themselves particularly slow or obstructive might be sacked forthwith, "to encourage the others." At the same time the heresy hunting which has been a typical feature of the British Civil Service, and which, if it has not yet reached the proportions it has in America and Canada, is still going on, must be stopped. It is time the Labour Ministers realised (as a handful of them to their credit already have) that their best and most efficient allies on their staffs are on the left.

It is is not, of course, suggested that the issue is solely a political one, although undoubtedly this is the biggest one. The perennial problem of red tape is a very real one. It was a real one in Russia more than a year after the Revolution had taken place, and vigilance is still exercised today, as is clear from the Soviet Press.

At the end of 1918, Lenin laid down that

> "Every Soviet collegium and every Soviet institution without exception must immediately do the following: First adopt a decision which shall exactly distribute the work and responsibilities among all members of the collegium and officials. Second, define in the most precise manner the responsibility of those persons who are performing given tasks, no matter of what kind, but particularly such as concern the speedy and proper collection and distribution of materials and products" (*Selected Works*, Vol. 9, p. 451).

The putting into force of these simple rules would soon improve the British Civil Service, and would end much of the notorious "passing the buck." Nevertheless, it should be remembered that the Civil Service has these characteristics for very real class reasons. Economic Departments such as the Board of Trade were not designed to play a positive role in the industrial field but to "keep the ring" for capitalism and to do it with the least expenditure of the taxpayers' money. This helps to explain the intricate system of checks and double checks and the present diffusion of responsibility. It is somewhat

ironic, therefore, to find business men so vocal in criticism of a system devised in their own interest and largely at their own behest.

Another very important issue at the present time is that of the Civil Service developing new contacts, and especially working-class contacts, in order to solve its problems. In a Socialist Civil Service this would present no difficulty, since there would be no question of the Civil Service being something apart from the people. Conservative Ministers naturally turned for advice to the Federation of British Industries and to leading bankers and industrialists. It is to be hoped that the Labour Ministers are turning to the trade unions. Be that as it may, however, it is against the whole tradition of the Civil Servant normally to turn for help to trade unionists or to the Co-operatives, and it is vitally important that the Civil Service unions, from inside, and the trade unions and other organisations of the Labour movement, from the outside, should combine to see that such contacts are made and developed.

There are many other ways in which the work of the Civil Service can be made more effective and the policy of the Government driven through against the resistance of the capitalists and their allies inside Government Departments. In Belgium, for example, there is a very interesting development, which could be adapted to the conditions of this country. The Belgian Civil Service, as in this country, is a permanent institution, but Ministers have the right to bring in or recruit, from outside or from inside their Departments, a "cabinet," which is a kind of secretariat with powers to act in Departmental matters on behalf of the Ministers, in addition to providing advice and secretarial help. The four Belgian Communist Ministers are making very good use of their "cabinets," which are recruited from Party members or sympathisers inside their Departments, or from similar people, including experts in the field in question from outside. Naturally the Communist Ministers have had to deal with real sabotage, but they have equipped themselves to do so. Each British Minister has two or three private secretaries, the chief of which, at least, is an official of some status, who can play a very big part in the work of the Department. If every Minister were to make sure that his private secretary was not only efficient, but also sympathetic to his policy, and if, in addition, he were to recruit a personal secretariat and give them real power, the programme of the Government could be pushed forward a good deal more effectively.

Clear thinking and fundamental thinking about this vital part of the State machine, the Civil Service, by the Labour movement is more necessary today than ever before.

It is an issue that concerns the whole movement, which should insist that real steps are taken to combat the thousand and one forms of sabotage, and that the Civil Service is shaped to deal more effectively with the problems of Labour's programme. The Civil Service unions must give the lead, and they are already showing that this task is within their powers.

THE STORY OF CAPITALISM

Studies in the Development of Capitalism. MAURICE DOBB. (Routledge, 18/-.)

WHAT makes this book of such absorbing interest is that Maurice Dobb presents the reader not only with the results of over twenty years' study of what happened in the last five hundred years, but with interpretations and explanations of *how* and *why* it happened, its causes and its results. The book " puts questions to economic history," and provides illuminating answers based on a wealth of material that is itself fascinating.

Of necessity, the beginnings of capitalism have to be studied in feudal society. The chapters on " The Decline of Feudalism and the Growth of Towns " and " Beginnings of the Bourgeoisie " shatter many traditional views, and stress the many-sided development that took place, with infinite variations not only as between England and other European countries, but within England itself. Yet with all the variations, certain clear tendencies emerge. The growth of trade and of a money economy was not the prime cause of the decline of feudalism; in many areas it actually strengthened feudalism, in Eastern Europe it even gave rise to feudalism, to the introduction of serfdom. The cause of the decline of feudalism must rather be sought in " forces internal to feudal economy "—" the inefficiency of feudalism as a system of production, coupled with the growing needs of the ruling class for revenue." The efforts of the lords to squeeze more from " the surplus labour-time of the servile class " led to the impoverishment of the producers and of the soil, and hence to mass desertion from the manors and the decline of production, as well as to continuous class conflict.

The separation into new classes and the continuous struggle between the classes in the towns, and between the towns and the feudal lords and kings, is a theme that runs through the early chapters. The struggle of the towns for freedom was not only to throw off feudal obligations, but to win independence in trade, the right to organise trade so as to give the rich townsmen the maximum profit. In all these

struggles "the economic crux evidently lay in the advantages which control of the local market could give." I like the solidarity of the burgesses of Dunstable who, threatened with ex-communication by the prior, resolved that they would "descend into hell all together" rather than submit.

The early form of production in the towns was "the petty mode of production" carried on by small producers, "owners of their own instruments of production, who traded freely in their own products." The richest, however, gradually developed into traders who did not produce, but came to control the sale of the products. The income of these traders "represented a share in the product of the peasant cultivator or the urban craftsman—a deduction from the product that would otherwise have accrued to the producers themselves or else as feudal revenue to the aristocracy." The "Gild Merchants" came to dominate the towns; they forced prices down to the producers, and organised sales at monopoly prices. Merchant capital later began to organise production both in the towns and the surrounding countryside; but these merchants were parasites on a feudal society, and were not the main force in the development of capitalist society. This force came from the richer craftsmen, whose concern was the extention of production on a capitalist basis.

The local market monopolies were often in conflict with monopolies granted by the Crown in return for financial help; these were of course quite different in character from the monopolies of today, but a contemporary description of the situation in the middle of the 17th century has a very modern ring: the monopolies, "like the frogs of Egypt, have gotten possession of our dwellings and we have scarcely a room free from them; they sip in our cup; they dip in our dish; they sit by our fire; we find them in the dye vat, the washing bowl and the powdering tub; they share with the butler in his bar; they have marked and sealed us from head to foot; they will not bate us a pin."

It was at this time that the rising capitalist forces in town and country carried through the bourgeois revolution, and Dobb gives interesting material about the groupings supporting Cromwell against Charles I, and the divisions that arose among them.

Chapters on "Capital Accumulation and Mercantilism" and "Growth of the Proletariat" carry the story forward to "The Industrial Revolution and the Nineteenth Century," with the rapid advance of technique and the growing size of enterprises which helped forward the concentration of capital and the rise of modern monopoly; and at the same time, the emergence of capitalist crisis. A study of the "Great Depression" of 1873 and the following years helps to

illuminate a number of theoretical points relating to price changes, wages and overproduction.

The final chapter, on "The Period Between Two Wars," presents valuable material on the successive crises, the influence of monopoly, and the fundamental links between economics and politics. A section dealing with "the new middle class" effectively disposes of certain myths whose real purpose is to divide the middle class from the workers.

It is impossible in a short review to give any adequate idea of the wealth of factual material and the effective presentation of the historical facts given in this book. I can only say that Maurice Dobb has made a magnificent contribution to economic and historical science—a contribution such as could only be made by a Marxist.

EMILE BURNS.

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